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DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF  
MEDICINE AND SCIENCE  
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September 8, 1977

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Department of Genetics  
School of Medicine  
Stanford University  
Stanford, California  
94305

Dear Professor Lederberg:

Thank you for your most interesting note of 29 August, 1977 with your comments on Young Endeavour and Creative Minds in Medicine. I am sorry I made a mistake about your advent at Yale. It is some years since I met with Ed Tatum on the Board of Muscular Dystrophy where he served us so well. When I have next occasion to refer to your remarkable career in print I shall correct the impression concerning Yale University. I wish also that you had finished Medicine but perhaps it would have delayed your great discoveries. We have missed half a dozen first class men here who take their Ph.D.'s with us or who arrive with a Ph.D., and I wish so much that they would do their medical degree. It would be something to fall back on economically if they had to, as research grants get chopped right and left, but also it would give them status on the hospital wards, which sometimes is very necessary.

I do not know when I have enjoyed so much reading a personal biography as I did that which you sent on such a marvelous long telegraphic type of paper. In case you have not seen the volume celebrating the 70th birthday of Francis O. Schmitt, may I give you the details? "The Neurosciences: Paths of Discovery", by Fredric G. Worden, Judith Swazey and George Adelman, Editors. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1975. It has 30 interesting autobiographical sketches by researchers who tell how they became interested in their particular field. Some are better done than others, but in general it is a facinating volume of 622 pages.

I note that you have marked the papers sent to me as personal and not for publication and I will certainly adhere to that warning and request!

The book with Jack Eccles that I am writing on Sherrington is almost completed now but I must say that I feel weak and fatigued when I contemplate the amount of writing which Sherrington did in his 95 years. And yet he was the most diffident of diminutive men, with a kindly bright eye and always time to help students. Alan Gregg listed him among the five or six greatest people he had met in his life.

Gibson, W.C.

I may be going to see branches of the U.B.C. Alumni Association in California in mid November and if so will try to get in to see you briefly. My father was a great Stanford man in the days of Terman and Cubberley in education but it is now years since I was on the campus, during Wallace Sterling's regime. I was telling Warren Howell the bookseller who was here the other day from San Francisco that he should get Sterling to raise the money for a History of Science and Medicine collection at Stanford. Howell claims that it is largely in boxes in the basement.

I have also to go down to Los Angeles to inspect the Gerry Lewis Muscle Research Center at U.C.L.A. next to the Brain Research Institute. I see that he raised \$26.8 million on Labour Day Telethon, which must be a record for a 20 hour performance. While I am no longer Chairman of their Scientific Advisory Committee I take a lot of pleasure in seeing my original programs being implemented insofar as concentrating on university centers is concerned, with a task force on the screening of new chemicals as possible therapeutic agents.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Gibson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

William C. Gibson, M.D., F.R.C.P.  
Head, Department of the History  
of Medicine and Science

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